

FOCUS

Missouri

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April 7, 2006

HEADLINE NEWS

Governor Promotes Missouri's Economy at International Biotech Conference



Gov. Matt Blunt will lead the state's 250-member delegation at the international convention of the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), to be held April 9-12 in Chicago. Gov. Blunt, accompanied by Missouri Department of Economic Director Greg Steinhoff and renowned Missouri scientists, academic leaders and business leaders, will be promoting Missouri's quality of life and reputation for scientific advancement to attract

bioscience research and businesses to the state, reinforcing the notion to attendees that the bioscience industry is important to Missouri. [Read more...](#)

Director Steinhoff: Improving Technology Commercialization

Missouri institutions conduct around \$1 billion in research annually, and with this state of the art research comes many opportunities for commercialization. The Department of Economic Development has, over the course of the past several months, worked with major Missouri research institutions, leading technology commercialization entities, venture capital professionals, and technology trade associations to identify ways to assist organizations as they turn innovation into thriving companies able to compete in an ever-changing market. [Read](#)

[more...](#)



Missouri Governor Matt Blunt and Trade Envoys from More Than 20 Nations Arriving in St. Louis for Global Business Summit



St. Louis, Missouri, USA . Missouri Governor Matt Blunt and trade envoys from more than 20 nations who want to do business with Missouri companies will join global executives at an international business summit hosted in St. Louis on May 11, 2006. [Read](#)

[more...](#)

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April 11, 2006
["European Standards Made Simple"](#)

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April 20, 2006
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April 23 - 26, 2006
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April 23 - 27, 2006
[Heartland BEDC Course](#)

April 30 - May 3, 2006
[National Business Incubation Association's 20th International Conference on Business Incubation](#)

Missouri Job Creation Continues to Grow

Missouri employment grew by 7,600 jobs in February, on a seasonally adjusted basis, up 0.3 percent from January. This addition of new jobs is part of Missouri's continued economic expansion under Gov. Matt Blunt's leadership. [Read more...](#)



Sikeston to Get Ethanol Plant



Bootheel Agri-Energy LLC announced its decision to purchase the option on approximately 160 acres at the Sikeston Business, Education and Technology Park, during a news conference on March 31st. The land will be used to build a coal-fired 100-million-gallon-per-year ethanol plant, according to David Herbst, president of Bootheel Agri-

Energy. [Read more...](#)

Aggressive Movement in the Legislature

This week proved to be an eventful week for the Department of Economic Development in the state Legislature. As I spend more and more time working with the legislators designing bills tailored to meet our state's economic needs, I continue to notice and appreciate the time and energy invested in improving our economy by the legislature. With only five weeks remaining, the House and Senate are averaging 12- to 14-hour days presenting, voting, and discussing bills in committee and on the chamber floors. This pace continued to quicken as we race towards our May 12th finish line. [Read more...](#)



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Missouri is Home to Ten Fortune 500 Companies



Ten Missouri-based companies made this year's list of the 500 companies in the U.S. with the greatest revenues. Emerson Electric was Missouri's highest ranking company at 126th, up eight spots from last year. Overall, Missouri ranked 15th among the states in the number of Fortune 1000 company headquarters with 28. [Read more...](#)

Missouri Personal Income Growth Solid in 4th Quarter of 2005

Personal income in Missouri increased 1.7 percent, from \$185.8 billion to \$188.9 billion, from the third quarter of 2005 to the fourth quarter of 2005, according to recently released data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). This was Missouri's fastest growth rate for any quarter in 2005.

[Read more...](#)



Boys and Girls Club Receive Youth Opportunities Tax Credits

Boys and Girls Club of Greater Kansas City will receive over \$150,000 in state tax credits for the center's Project Learn and SMART Moves projects. The organization is expected to leverage up to \$301,652 in local contributions to help fund the projects that will serve over 340 youth throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area. [Read more...](#)

Old Post Office is New Again

Once one of downtown's most notorious pigeon roosts after sitting vacant for many years, the Old Post Office and U.S. Customs House not only has a new lease on life, it is also stimulating hundreds of millions of dollars in new investment in downtown St. Louis. [Read more...](#)

Royals Charities "Royalty Fields" Program

Kansas City Royals Charities will provide financial support to help improve baseball and/or softball facilities throughout the Midwest region. Royals Charities will match grants up to \$5,000 to help small non-profit organizations and local government units that operate baseball and/or softball programs. [Read more...](#)

Job Fair Jefferson City Attracts Over 60 Area Businesses

The Missouri Division of Workforce Development is working to match qualified workers and employers at Job Fair Jefferson City, the area's first major job fair in several years. Job Fair Jefferson City will be held April 6-7, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Missouri Career Center in Jefferson City.

On April 6, job seekers looking for work in Communications, Education, Financial, Government, Health and Information Technology will be able to meet with prospective employers and businesses. April 7 is devoted to the fields of Employment Agencies, Hospitality, Manufacturing, Retail, Services and Utilities. Sixty-six area businesses and agencies are participating.

[Read more...](#)

More Women on Corporate Boards

According to a recent article in the St. Louis Post Dispatch, companies around the nation are adding women to their boards of directors -- but very slowly, a new national study shows. According to the study, women hold 14.7 percent of the seats on Fortune 500 boards, up from 13.6 percent in 2003 and up from 9.6 percent in 1995. [Read more...](#)

Bayer Creates Partnerships for Contract Manufacturing

Bayer HealthCare is aiming to decrease pharmaceutical outsourcing and increase awareness of its facilities to gain business with contract manufacturing partners. With Bayer's excellent relationship with the Food and Drug Administration, as well as its large portfolio and ability to make a wide range of products, it is an ideal host for contract work. [Read more...](#)

Proteon Receives \$19M in Venture Capital

Kansas City-based Proteon Therapeutics LLC recently received a total of \$19 million in venture capital investments. Investor interest was peaked by a new drug Proteon is developing. The venture capital infusion will be used to hire six new employees and contract with a company to help manufacture the drug. [Read more...](#)

O'Reillys Receive Excellence in Business Award

The O'Reilly Automotive family has received the Ozarks Technical Community College Excellence in Business award for its superb business culture that includes family and corporate values. [Read more...](#)

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(573) 522-5058

[Jane Holtsman](#)
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missourifocus@ded.mo.gov

State IT Spending Expected to Increase

A recent report issued by Reston, Va.-based research firm, Input, predicts a dramatic slowdown in spending by federal agencies on information technology. However, the forecast expects state and local IT spending to grow from about \$50 billion this year to \$72 billion by 2011. [Read more...](#)

Amgen Announces Expansion in Seattle

California-based biotech firm, Amgen, announced last week that it add 550,000 square feet of new office and lab space at its Seattle facility. The expansion will include six new buildings and will create 150 new jobs this year, with the capacity to house up to 750 new employees. [Read more...](#)

**Indiana's Economic Development Activities Increase**

During the month of March, Indiana has seen an upswing in economic development activities. The state has announced a headquarters location, three manufacturing plants and two plant expansions. Incentives and grants from the Indiana Economic Development Corporation will assist these companies in creating over 1,700 new permanent jobs from these projects. [Read more...](#)

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Missouri

Show Me Information

April 14, 2006

HEADLINE NEWS

Blunt Sells Missouri to Biotech

Gov. Matt Blunt held a Tuesday morning breakfast for business leaders and held court at the Missouri pavilion during a crowded exhibition hall reception that evening. His message: The Show-Me state has a good quality of life, biotech business infrastructure, private investors and, perhaps, a job-creation or tax incentive or two on the table for businesses ready to expand or locate there. [Read more...](#)



Board of Pharmacy Leads the Way to Assure Products are Safe and Effective



The Missouri Board of Pharmacy is leading the way with a new testing program designed to provide information about whether or not a pharmacy in the state is providing good products to its consumers. The Board of Pharmacy has begun random testing of compounded products provided by pharmacies to ensure the drugs that are delivered to patients are safe and effective. [Read more...](#)

Ethanol Mandate Nearing Approval



Missouri's ethanol mandate moved closer to reality last week. The House approved a bill Thursday requiring most gasoline to contain a 10 percent ethanol blend beginning Jan. 1, 2008. [Read more...](#)

Columbia, MO Ranks 6th as a Top Metro for College Educated People

Having a major university or, better yet, having a wide variety of colleges and universities, is a major asset to a community. Universities not only provide a steady flow of educated workers, their faculty members also are a major resource for knowledge-based companies. If you look at all of the great technology centers during the past few decades, every one of them (i.e., Silicon Valley, Research Triangle, Boston's Route 128, etc.) has been built around the presence of world-class universities. [Read more...](#)



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Legislative Update: Working on a Compromise



It has been nearly a decade since a major investment has been made in to Missouri's higher education institutions, and while everyone agrees on the investment, there is a consensus lacking as to how the monies should be spent. This week the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority's partial sale of assets took center stage in the legislature as the Governor, House and Senate pulled together to pass a unified MOHELA proposal before session wraps up in May. [Read more...](#)



Health Care Occupational Clusters



The Health Care and Social Assistance industry is a growing part of Missouri's economy. By 2012, the number of Pharmacy-Related careers is projected to increase by 26%. In this series of healthcare briefs, the outlook for future growth in the industry is available for five occupational clusters: Physician-Related, Pharmacy-Related, Nursing, Allied Health, and Miscellaneous Healthcare occupations. [Read more...](#)

What's Your Career Plan?

Going places professionally? The *2006-07 Missouri Career Guide*, now on the web at missourieconomy.org, is a great resource for developing or propelling a career. The guide is available in three versions: a full, print-ready version with optimized graphics, at 26.5 MB; a full, print-ready version with good quality graphics for quicker downloading, 4.8 MB; and section by section, with good quality graphics, each no more than 1.2 MB. [Read more...](#)



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Fort Scott Plans for Future

Residents of Fort Scott gathered to create a community vision for the future of their town. Their vision is a progressive community that is building on a foundation of heritage, pride and prosperity. Community members plan to use this vision as a starting point for revitalization efforts. [Read more...](#)



DWD Employees Recognized

The Missouri Association of Workforce Development (MAWD) recently announce winners of their "Professional of the Year" awards at their annual conference held April 3-5 at Lake Ozark. For the first time, this year's recipients were both Division of Workforce Development employees. Recognized as the MAWD New



K.C. Life Sciences Promoted at Research Day

The Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute, Inc. (KCALSI) recently hosted the annual Research Day at Bartle Hall, attracting university students, educators, scientists and business leaders. At a dinner hosted by KCALSI the night before, the theme was promoting animal health and nutrition in the

The Intersection will Receive Youth Opportunities Tax Credits

The Intersection will receive over \$69,000 in state tax credits for the organization's "Investing in Me" program. The Intersection is expected to leverage up to \$139,900 in local contributions to help fund additional staff to the current after-school program and fund the "Investing in Me" program, which provides after-school programs and youth job training to over 320 youth throughout the Columbia region. [Read more...](#)

Higbee Receives Grant for Playground Equipment at Katy Park

The City of Higbee has been awarded a grant for \$14,092 from the Mark Twain Solid Waste District for the purpose of purchasing playground equipment for the Higbee Katy Park. The grant received is a matching grant and would fund approximately half of the project, with the other half being paid for through money set aside by the City of Higbee, by donations of cash, labor and materials received from local residents and businesses. [Read more...](#)

Professionals of the Year was Janice Dawson-Threat, a counselor from the Columbia Career Center and Cathy Collop, a Kirksville Career Center supervisor.

Congratulations to these two women for their outstanding efforts!



l. to r. - Collop, DWD Director, Rod Nunn, Dawson-Threat

Statewide Marketing Taskforce Receives Training

Celina Shands, President and CEO of Full Capacity Marketing, presented three sessions at the Missouri Association of Workforce Development conference last week, capping it off with a special info-share with the Statewide Marketing Taskforce. The sessions included 'Adapting the Business Model to Workforce Development' and 'Cost Effective Business Outreach.'

The Taskforce is forming a special Market Research subcommittee, based on these suggestions. Call Taskforce Chair Michael Waltman at 573-526-8267 for session handouts. Log onto www.fullcapacitymarketing.com and www.imagishift.com for more general information.

area and developing the region into a life sciences hub. [Read more...](#)

Small Businesses Invited to Testify about Regulatory Fairness of State Agencies

The Small Business Regulatory Fairness Board will hold a public hearing on Monday, May 1, to seek public comment on the state rules and regulations that impact small businesses. The hearing will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Room 500 of the Harry S Truman Building, 301 West High Street, Jefferson City. [Read more...](#)

SBA Loans Help Finance Small Business Growth

The Small Business Administration 504 loan program, also called the Certified Development Company/504 Program, is designed to help entrepreneurs take their business to the next level with financing assistance. SBA size standards that companies must meet to qualify for the CDC/504 program include not having a tangible net worth of more than \$7 million, and not having an average net income of more than \$2.5 million after taxes for the two preceding years. [Read more...](#)

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[Associated Industries of Missouri \(AIM\)](#)

[Missouri Enterprise Business Assistance Center](#)

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[Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)

Ethanol Fuel from Tires?

Startech Environmental Corporation and Future Fuels, Inc. (FFI) have formed an agreement to mutually obtain contracts for waste-to-ethanol facilities and for FFI's \$84 million facility to be constructed in Toms River, N.J. FFI will purchase a Startech Plasma Converter System (PCS) to be installed in the first-of-its-kind Waste-to-Ethanol facility in Toms River. The PCS will safely destroy tires in its process that results in a clean synthesis gas product called Plasma Converted Gas. The gas will then be fed into FFI's system to make commercial fuel-grade ethanol. [Read more...](#)

China Labor Shortage May Create Shift in World Trade

The shortage of labor at hundreds of Chinese factories is pushing up wages and could make Chinese-made products less of a bargain worldwide. International manufacturers are already talking about moving factories to lower-cost countries like Vietnam. Experts foresee a change in the economy that could affect the global market for manufactured goods. [Read more...](#)

**Honduras and Nicaragua Will Enter CAFTA**

Effective April 8, the Central American Free Trade Agreement was implemented for Honduras and Nicaragua. The two countries join El Salvador in entering the trade agreement, which aims to bring down trade barriers between those countries and the United States. The White House has said that CAFTA will further open a market of 44 million consumers of U.S. products and "strengthen our security at home by promoting democracy and prosperity in our hemisphere." [Read more...](#)

Poland Business Leaders to Visit St. Louis

St. Louis Mayor Francis G. Slay and the Honorable Marian Jurczyk, Mayor of Szczecin, Poland, have laid the groundwork for a Polish trade mission to St. Louis the week of May 8, 2006. The upcoming Polish mission to St. Louis was arranged by officials from the St. Louis Center for International Relations and World Trade Center Saint Louis who visited Szczecin last October to promote trade and reciprocal investments. Like St. Louis, Szczecin is an industrial manufacturing center with a skilled labor force, leading universities and a thriving deep water port. [Read more...](#)



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April 21, 2006

HEADLINE NEWS

Blunt Named as One of Ten Who Made a Difference by *Southern Business and Development*



Gov. Matt Blunt received recognition as one of the "10 People Who Made A Difference" by *Southern Business and Development* magazine for his work boosting Missouri's economy. "I am proud of the work we have accomplished in a very short period of time for Missouri's working families," Blunt said. "We will continue to work diligently to improve the quality of life and help create more opportunities for all Missourians, and I am honored by this special recognition." [Read more...](#)

Lieutenant Governor Promotes Sale of MOHELA Assets

Lieutenant Governor Peter Kinder met with area leaders from Missouri Southern State University to promote the Governor's proposal to use the monies generated by the partial asset sale of the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority towards investments in higher education. This proposal, known as the Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative, includes \$19 million for a new health sciences building at Missouri Southern State University. [Read more...](#)



Missouri's Initiatives Spur Corporate Growth



Missouri was recognized this month by *Business Xpansion Journal* for its continued dedication to economic growth. Through promoting the state's assets, which are continually being improved to meet the needs of the state's evolving business climate, Missouri has been able to attract and retain more businesses, providing additional career opportunities for Missourians. Several areas the state is advancing to promote economic growth are Missouri industries, workforce, education and business climate. [Read more...](#)

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May 8, 2006
[AMBASSADORS' DIALOGUE: "Issues facing Korea and United States"](#)

May 8, 9, 12 and 16, 2006
at various locations
around the state
[Competing in Mexico](#)

First Biodiesel Pump Opens in Kansas City

U.S. Senator Jim Talent was on hand as the first biodiesel pump opened in downtown Kansas City, making it the second city in the state to carry the renewable fuel. "Renewable fuels such as biodiesel will assist our producers, increase our energy independence, create American jobs and, as an added benefit, they are good for the environment," said Sen. Jim Talent, R-Mo. [Read more...](#)



Missouri Lawmakers Consider Proposals to Limit Eminent Domain and TIF



The Legislature met last week to continue debate on pressing economic issues across the state. The Senate perfected and placed on the calendar to third read Senate Bill 832, which refines tax increment financing language to certain projects, while the House of Representatives passed and sent to the

Senate House Bill 1944, which revises the language of current eminent domain policy to limit abuses. [Read more...](#)

Legislative Update: The Legislature is Sprinting towards the Finish

This week, Legislative Director Brian Grace updates readers on House Bill 1022, which is the appropriation bill for the revenues generated by the partial sale of assets by the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority; House Bill 1521, which modifies the Missouri Business Use Incentive for Large-Scale Development Act to expand the definition of "essential industry" to include certain businesses in the City of Fenton; and Senate Bill 1008, which creates the Governor's Advisory Council on Agricultural Science and Technology. [Read more...](#)



Missouri Focus Wins Award

The Marketing team in Business & Community Services received notification last week that the *Missouri Focus* e-newsletter has received an Award of Distinction in the Print Competition category from The Communicator Awards. The Award of Distinction is given for projects that exceed industry standards in design or communication skills. Congratulations to the BCS Marketing team!



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MERIC and OA Go Back to School



MERIC's mission is to provide value-added research with a customer focus - now to middle schoolers, too. As part of its ongoing outreach efforts, MERIC'S Outreach, Training and Technology staff will transform the Thomas Jefferson Middle School, 1201 Fairground Road, Jefferson City, into a career fair Saturday, April 29, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The event is a collaboration between the Office of Administration's Office of Supplier & Workforce Diversity and MERIC. [Read more...](#)

Profiling Missouri's Regions: Southwest

Missouri's Southwest Region is made up of Barry, Barton, Cedar, Dade, Jasper, Lawrence, McDonald, Newton and Vernon Counties, including Joplin, Neosho, and Stockton Lake. The region's population is projected to grow by 19.1 percent from 2005 to 2025, compared to the 9.2 percent projected growth for the state as a whole.

[Read more...](#)



FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

Aurora Balances Charm, Convenience

Aurora, with its unprecedented population expansion, is working to revitalize its downtown area, while expanding economic growth opportunities for its community. Currently, city officials are working to maintain the quaint small-town charm of the community, while at the same time bring in corporate businesses to meet the growing needs of the community. [Read more...](#)



FOCUS ON WORKFORCE

Job Fair Jefferson City a Success!

The Job Fair Jefferson City was a great success thanks to the cooperation of numerous businesses and area organizations. The outreach began with local staff taking the message out to the business community and promoting the event among local chambers of commerce and human resources groups. A brief presentation by Mike Chittum, Central Region Business Representative, at the Jefferson City Chamber's "Good Afternoon Jefferson City" was attended by over 100 people.

The Jefferson City Career Center staff contributed by promoting the event among walk-in traffic at the career center, making phone calls and sending out hundreds of mailings.



FOCUS ON BUSINESS

Downing Receives KCIC Award

Mike Downing, Business & Community Services Promotions Director, recently received one of three Brick-by-Brick Awards given to economic development partners by the Kansas City Industrial Council. KCIC is the area's primary advocacy group for industry and includes members from each of the city's six industrial areas who work jointly to create a strong, vital industrial base.

Empire Gains Approval of PCS for Aquila Acquisition

Joplin-based Empire District Gas Co. has received approval from the Missouri Public Service Commission to acquire Kansas City-based Aquila Inc.'s natural gas system. The \$84 million acquisition is expected to close June 1 and will help

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Titanic Growth in Branson, Missouri

Branson has long been a tourist town for Missouri, and with new attractions being developed, Branson continues to see economic and popularity growth. Recently, a new museum dedicated to the Titanic opened in Branson to maintain the city's allure as a wholesome family vacation spot. [Read more...](#)

Presbyterian Children's Services will receive YOP Credits

Gov. Matt Blunt announced that Presbyterian Children's Services will receive over \$125,000 in state tax credits to expand programs and develop new community based services. Presbyterian Children's Services is expected to leverage up to \$250,000 in local contributions to help fund the project, which provides mentoring, educational opportunities and violence, drug, and alcohol awareness to over 480 youth throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area. [Read more...](#)

KWOS and KLIK also contributed by providing radio spots for the event.

The success of Job Fair Jefferson City was the result of the hard work of career center staff and participation from the business community, local press and business organizations like the chamber of commerce. The job fair was so heavily attended that several businesses ran out of applications on the first day. Evaluations by participating businesses were very positive and overwhelmingly supportive of more fairs being put on by the career center.



I. to r. - Chittum, Herald Bullock,
Jefferson City Career Center
Supervisor

to diversify Empire's weather risk by offsetting its summer peak with Aquila's natural gas winter heating peak. The company plans to add 25 to 30 employees at system locations and in Joplin. [Read more...](#)

Osborn Dairy Owners Win Small Business Award

Shatto Milk Co. owners, Barbara and Leroy Shatto, were recently honored with the 2006 Missouri Small Businesspersons Award from the Small Business Administration. President Bush also presented them with the second runner-up award for the 2006 SBA Small Businesspersons of the Year. The Shattos met with the president in Washington D.C. and arranged to have their milk delivered for President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney. [Read more...](#)

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German Executives Visit St. Louis

Two Stuttgart, Germany business executives recently visited St. Louis to appraise office space and distribution opportunities for German businesses. President of AAA Translation, Inc. and 2006 president of the St. Louis-Stuttgart Sister City Organization, Susanne Evens, stated, "St. Louis and Stuttgart have enjoyed productive relationships for many years and this recent trip strengthened those bonds." [Read more...](#)

Monsanto Donates \$1 Million for Iowa Biotech Education Center

Monsanto Co. will contribute a \$1 million gift to help create the Monsanto Center for Biotech Education on the Ankeny, Iowa campus of the Des Moines Area Community College. The center will be developed within the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Enrichment Center and will serve Iowa's 12,000 FFA members, as well as agricultural and general science students. [Read more...](#)



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April 28, 2006

HEADLINE NEWS

Senate Committee Endorses Ethanol Bill



The Senate's Agriculture Committee has passed legislation requiring the state to produce an ethanol blended fuel. Supporters of this bill promote the economic savings to consumers and the additional benefit to the state's economy by using renewable sources produced in the state. Opponents of the bill say that incentives, not mandates, are the way to improve the state's economy. [Read more...](#)

Incentives Approved for Automaker

This week the Missouri House gave final approval to legislation granting tax incentives to the DaimlerChrysler plant in Fenton. The facility will have \$1 billion in total investment with \$54 million coming from the state. Of the \$54 million, \$16 million is for job training and \$16 million for industrial development bonds. [Read more...](#)



Lawmakers Vote to Repeal Tax on Businesses' Assets, Property



The Missouri House gave approval to a bill that will eliminate the current tax code requiring corporations to pay a yearly income tax and a franchise tax. Under the legislation, the franchise tax rate would be slowly be decreased over several years until it is fully repealed in 2011. [Read more...](#)

Economic Development Focus of SMEDA

Mike Mills, Deputy Director of the Department of Economic Development, spoke at the Southeast Missouri Economic Development Alliance (SMEDA) Spring Conference to further promote economic development in the Southeast region, and to increase area competitiveness. [Read more...](#)



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May 8, 2006

[AMBASSADORS' DIALOGUE: "Issues facing Korea and United States"](#)

May 8, 9, 12 and 16, 2006
at various locations
around the state
[Competing in Mexico](#)

May 16, 2006

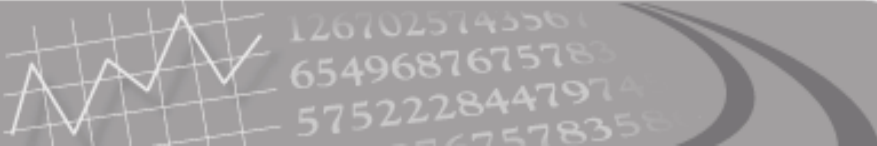
[World Trade Center - St. Louis May Networking Reception](#)

The Legislative Countdown



With only three weeks remaining, the Missouri legislature met to further discuss the state's most pressing economic legislation. In this week's legislative update, the Department will be providing information for House Bill 1270, the ethanol blended fuel proposal; House Bill 1022, the House version of the MOHELA allocations; House Bill 1944, Eminent Domain Reform; and Senate Bill 832, Tax Increment Financing Reform. [Read more...](#)

MERIC
TREND SIGHTS



MO and IL Receive Special Recognition Award from U.S. Census Bureau



Missouri Department of Economic Development Director Greg Steinhoff accepted a special recognition award from the U.S. Census Bureau on Monday in St. Louis for Missouri's and Illinois' work on sharing cross-state commuting and employment data from the Census Bureau's Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program. MERIC administers the LED program for Missouri.

Understanding the nature of cross-state employment and commuting patterns is helpful to both states in economic and workforce development. The LED program has also been used in analyzing the economic impact of the proposed new Mississippi River Bridge in St. Louis and studying areas in each state that were recently affected by tornadoes. [Read more...](#)

Missouri's Business Climate Comparison Tool in Action: Venture Capital

According to the MoneyTree Survey for Venture Capital Investments, Missouri ranks near the top nationally in average amount per investment deal and high among its adjacent states in venture capital investments. Venture capital investments are provided by outside investors for financing new, growing or struggling businesses.



MERIC's Business Climate Comparison (BCC) online tool provides data for venture capital investments and 71 other business climate indicators to compare Missouri to any number of other states. [Read more...](#)

May 17 - 19, 2006

[MEDC Spring Conference](#)

(Click on Events)

"Mapping Missouri's Success"

May 17 - 19, 2006

[Bio Forum & Bio Expo Japan](#)

May 28 - June 7, 2006

[Missouri Trade Mission to China 2006](#)

June 6 - 8, 2006

[Alimentaria Mexico 2006](#)

International Food & Beverage Exposition Mexico City

June 8 - 9, 2006

[Missouri Economic Development Financing Association 2006 Annual Conference](#)

June 19 - 23, 2006

[NPE 2006: National Plastics Exposition International Showcase](#)

June 25 - 28, 2006

[2006 CDS Annual International Conference](#)
"Communities that Click: Individuals, Families, and Organizations Working Together"

June 27 - 30, 2006

[Expo Pack 2006](#)
Mexico City, Centro Banamex

[PAST ISSUES](#)

[March 2006 Missouri Focus Issues](#)



Purdy AmeriCorps Asked To Help!

Recently a rescue effort was coordinated at a cave near Mineral Springs. A call was placed to Purdy R-II School District, where twelve members of AmeriCorps, the Purdy Reading Coaches, have been trained in CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) by the Lawrence/Barry County Office of Emergency Management. Fully trained as emergency volunteers, they are able to coordinate a quick response within their community in the event of a disaster or other emergency. Responding to the call were Reading Coaches Vanessa Horn and Cathy Williams, who were willing to help where needed. Our congratulations go out to everyone who helped in the successful rescue efforts.



2006 Community Project of the Year Award

The Division of Business and Community Services is now taking nominations for the 2006 Community Project of the Year Award to be given at the Governor's Conference on Economic Development, September 25-27. The award recognizes the best example of a community development project. The project must show a

Retreat Held for Administrative Professionals

In honor of Administrative Professionals' Week, the Division of Workforce Development hosted an internal retreat on Monday for all staff in office support positions. In an effort to continue professional development, the half-day retreat covered topics such as retention schedules and archiving, e-mail etiquette, expense accounts, out of state travel procedures and training needs. It concluded with participants developing an action plan that relates directly to their position. The retreat was led by Donna Prenger, Deputy Director of Administration.

Annual Report Now Online!

The 2005 Annual Report on Workforce Performance: Showcasing Workforce Excellence is now available on-line at <http://ded.mo.gov/wfd/>.

In addition to Program Year 2004 Workforce Investment Act performance numbers, this report describes other Division of Workforce Development programs and outlines several initiatives that were especially noteworthy during the 2005 calendar year.

Missouri Trade Mission to China is Fast Approaching

China holds huge potential for American exporters, particularly in key sectors such as energy, environmental technology, biotechnology, medical equipment, construction material, services, and franchising. In 2005, U.S. exports to China grew 20.5 percent. In terms of U.S. goods exports, China was fourth, at \$41.8 billion, behind only Canada, Mexico, and Japan. Missouri's exports to China grew 36.5 percent in 2005, higher than the national average, reaching a historical high of \$499.5 million. Sign up now for your opportunity to join the Missouri Trade Mission to China. Registration deadline is May 2. [Read more...](#)



News Orleans College Moves to K.C. Area

Due to Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans-based Grantham University has relocated workers to the Kansas City area and has added around 160 additional employees, with more hiring expected by the end of the year. The new "campus" for distance learning, targeted at working adults, consists of 30,000 square feet of offices in the Zona Rosa center in the Northland.

February 2006 Missouri Focus Issues

DED PRESS RELEASES

QUICK LINKS

[Dept. of Economic Development \(DED\)](#)

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[GreatHires.org](#)

[Missouri Training and Employment Council \(MTEC\)](#)

[MERIC](#)

[Division of Tourism](#)

[Missouri Community Betterment](#)

[Missouri Community Service Commission \(MCSC\)](#)

[Missouri Arts Council](#)

[Missouri Economic Development Council \(MEDC\)](#)

[Associated Industries of Missouri \(AIM\)](#)

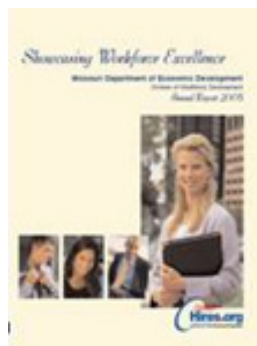
[Missouri Enterprise Business Assistance Center](#)

[Missouri General Assembly](#)

significant impact on the community and its citizens. The nomination form is available online at [CD Award Form](#). Nominations are open to anyone and are due no later than Monday, May 15, 2006. Contact Brenda Horstman at 573-751-3713 or [Brenda Horstman](#) if you have any questions. [Read more...](#)

Brookfield Hometown Competitiveness

The Brookfield Hometown Competitiveness (HTC) Task Forces and Steering Committee met in March to discuss their economic development efforts and the successes earned through their dedication. During this time they also met with Hometown Competitiveness consultants and a representative from the University of Missouri extension office to establish goals for the upcoming year. [Read more...](#)



2006 Job Market the Strongest in Five Years for New Grads

The reality of the 2006 job market is that it's the strongest in five years for the nation's 1.4 million new graduates, whatever their major, as seniors finally have the luxury of choosing among multiple offers from employers promising good pay and perks. Employers report that they're planning to hire 14.5 percent more new college grads this year than they hired in 2005 - and at starting-salary offers that are up 6.2 percent on average to \$45,723 from a year ago, the National Assoc. of Colleges and Employers reports. Marilyn Mackes, the group's executive director, says that engineering majors can expect to see the highest starting salaries, with their averages topping \$50,000. This is followed by computer-science majors, accounting and economics-finance majors at more than \$45,000 each. [Read more...](#)

[Read more...](#)

Unilever, City Work to Protect Jefferson City Jobs

Jefferson City officials recently negotiated a new lease with Unilever in order to preserve jobs at the company's existing facility in Capitol City. The extended 10-year lease with a 10-year option means the property could remain owned by the city and the company will benefit from a local property tax break. [Read more...](#)

Chesterfield Firm Purchases Qpass

Chesterfield, Mo.-based software company, Amdocs, will spend \$275 million cash to purchase Seattle-based Qpass, a business system software provider. Qpass' major customers include Cingular Wireless, T-Mobile International, Vodafone, Sprint, SunCom, Alltel, US Cellular, One and Skype. [Read more...](#)

[Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)



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**Questions or Comments?
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(573) 522-5058

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(573) 522-1593

or email:
missourifocus@ded.mo.gov

Trade Representatives Invite Business Leaders to Springfield Meetings

The Greater Ozarks International Trade Association, the Southwest Area Manufacturers Association and the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring one-on-one meetings for business leaders interested in trade opportunities to meet with two of Missouri's Mexico trade representatives. Several meeting slots remain open to meet with Todd C. Nelson, director of the Missouri Trade and Investment Office in Mexico, and Patricia Meza, international trade specialist for Missouri in Mexico City. Tickets to the luncheon are \$15 per person in advance and \$20 at the door. To register for the lunch or an individual meeting, contact Bill Owen at (417) 887-5855 or bill.owen@umb.com.

[Read more...](#)

Washington Company Creating Plug-in Hybrid Car

AFS Trinity Power Corp., of Bellevue, Wash., is working with United Kingdom-based auto engineering company, Ricardo PLC, to build plug-in hybrid cars that can drive 250 miles on a single gallon of gas. The two companies are working together to raise an estimated \$150 million needed to commercialize the concept. Hybrid vehicles will be tested by Plug-In Partners, who say the electrical equivalent of one gallon of gasoline costs less than \$1. [Read more...](#)

**Information Tech Firms Looking at Vietnam**

Vietnam's highly literate, young workforce is looking very attractive to an array of foreign industries and services, including IT firms. Intel, the world's largest chip maker, will build a \$605 million microchip assembly and testing plant in the commercial hub of Ho Chi Minh City. Bill Gates was scheduled to visit the country last weekend to visit with students and call on Bac Ninh province to view the IT industry there. Vietnam trails the big leaders in IT; however, International Business Machines, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft and Intel all have Vietnam offices. [Read more...](#)